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STATE FOR WHA/CAR RCBUDDEN, IO/UNP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/14/2016
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [UNGA](#) [BF](#)
SUBJECT: UNGA THIRD COMMITTEE: BAHAMAS ASSESSING COUNTRY
SPECIFIC HUMAN RIGHTS RESOLUTIONS

REF: A. SECSTATE 182267

[1](#)B. SECSTATE 184178

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission D. Brent Hardt Reasons: 1.5 (b)
) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Charge d'Affaires delivered reftel demarches to Foreign Minister Mitchell and MFA Permanent Secretary Rodgers, noting that the Secretary had asked that we convey strong U.S. opposition to the use of 'no action' motions to block UNGA consideration of human rights issues. He emphasized that such motions would undermine the Third Committee as a meaningful forum to address human rights. Ambassador and DCM subsequently approached the Foreign Minister, who indicated that he had passed the issue to his Permanent Secretary for action.

[1](#)2. (C) Permanent Secretary Rodgers advised DCM that the government was looking at each vote individually, assessing how it had voted last year and whether any changes were in order. She believed that The Bahamas had abstained on these resolutions last year with an accompanying 'explanation of vote.' She doubted that The Bahamas would support any 'no action' resolutions, but was not able to confirm this until the government had completed its review. The MFA is preparing a paper for cabinet review on these issues -- in part because of the high profile they attracted after the Embassy publicly highlighted the government's human rights votes this past year.

[1](#)3. (C) DCM pressed Rodgers to support the resolutions, which he noted would be in line with The Bahamas' democratic values and traditional concern for human rights. By contrast, he pointed out that a "no action" vote would serve to end debate and prevent U.N. focus on the serious human rights abuses in Iran, North Korea, Belarus, Burma, and Uzbekistan. Rodgers pledged to update the Embassy after Cabinet had reviewed the ministry's paper and considered its approach for the upcoming votes.
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